

REPORT ON HOUSING STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

City of Santa Clara
General Plan and Zoning Code Update

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City of Santa Clara | August 2008

Prepared by Dyett & Bhatia

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I INTRODUCTION

This summary describes interviews with housing stakeholder—members of the Santa Clara community, who work in the field of housing and/or social services—undertaken between June 21 and June 25, 2008. Findings from these interviews are used as input to the opportunities and challenges assessment phase of the General Plan Update project—in particular, the Housing Element Update. These stakeholder interviews are one component of the public participation program for the General Plan Update, and will be complemented with workshops, a survey, and other outreach that involves the entire community.

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING UPDATE PROJECT

One of the oldest communities in the Bay Area, the City of Santa Clara is imbued with a history that both defines the City and sets the standard for a high quality of life. Since the preparation of the last comprehensive General Plan in 1992, Santa Clara has continued to evolve dynamically, aided by its location in the heart of Silicon Valley. Today, Santa Clara is home to major global corporations, regional entertainment and convention facilities, multiple recreation facilities, excellent schools, and a well-connected transportation system. Santa Clara is also home to over 115,000 residents, a 21 percent increase in population since 1992.

Many of the objectives of Santa Clara's 1992 General Plan have been met, and many new opportunities, challenges, and approaches have emerged. In addition, market conditions, local demographics, and the larger metropolitan context surrounding the City have changed. These are all good reasons to take a fresh look at the vision for the future. In 2007, the City Council initiated a comprehensive update of the General Plan and Zoning Code. The project was kicked off in early 2008. A Steering Committee was appointed in June 2008 to shepherd the process.

General Plan

The community is undertaking a comprehensive update of Santa Clara's General Plan to revisit its policies and frame a sustainable land use, urban design, and transportation vision for the next 25 years. Topics that the General Plan will likely include:

- Land Use
- Community Design and Historic Preservation
- Sustainability
- Transportation
- Parks and Recreation
- Conservation/Environmental Quality
- Housing
- Safety
- Noise

- Public Facilities and Services

Housing Element

The Housing Element is one of the seven required elements of the General Plan. State law requires that it be updated every five years and, therefore, it follows a different schedule from the rest of a general plan. The State Department of Housing and Community Development determines housing needs for various regions. Regional governments throughout the State (i.e. the Association of Bay Area Governments – ABAG – for the San Francisco Bay Area) then allocate this need to each city and county in the region. This allocation includes a specific number of units at varying household income levels. In turn, local governments then reflect this allocation in their housing elements, and develop goals and policies to accommodate the projected need.

Zoning Code

The General Plan Update will be accompanied by a comprehensive rewrite of the Zoning Code. The new Zoning Code will translate land use policies directly into development standards, regulations, and procedures to implement the goals and objectives of the Plan on a daily basis. The goal is to create a clear, accessible, and easily administered Zoning Code that incorporates community input and can be understood by all.

Environmental Impact Report

A comprehensive Environmental Impact Report will also be prepared, along with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Environmental Impact Report will evaluate the potential impacts that the new Plan will have on the environment. It will be prepared in parallel with the General Plan Update so that any necessary mitigation can be folded into Plan policies.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

In order to create an inclusive and cohesive vision for the City, the public participation program will include a multi-faceted approach over a two-year period. The goal is to engage a broad constituency of the City's population and interests.

- Community workshops will cover various General Plan, Zoning and EIR related topics to synthesize issues, visions, and policies from the community at large.
- Citywide mail-in survey will be administered through a newsletter to solicit ideas and feedbacks for alternative planning scenarios.
- Key group outreach and neighborhood briefings will be held to provide information, discussion forums and presentations to community groups and organizations.
- General Plan Steering Committee meetings will guide policy development and direction of the General Plan, building on ideas that emerge through the rest of the public participation process;
- City Council/Planning Commission meetings and joint study sessions will serve to "check-in" on progress at key stages of the project.

- Stakeholder meetings will provide opportunities for individuals and small groups to engage in candid discussions about key issues, related to the General Plan, Housing Element and Zoning Code updates.
- Newsletters are proposed at four key points in the General Plan Update for distribution to residents and businesses throughout the City.
- General Plan website (www.SantaClaraGP.com) provides access to information. Throughout the planning process, materials and information—including project descriptions, meeting announcements, and draft products—will be posted on this website.
- Press and media releases will also be prepared and distributed to local media at key benchmarks in the planning process.

While the planning process will take direction from many sources, the most important voice will be that of the community. The ideas, suggestions, insight, and critical input of residents and businesses are essential in the creation of a new General Plan that accurately reflects the common goals, needs, visions, and desires of the community.

HOUSING STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The bulk of the housing stakeholder interviews were conducted as part of a two-hour focus group. Additional interviews were conducted individually or in small groups. In total, 12 individuals participated in the stakeholder meetings. (A complete list of stakeholders is provided in Appendix A.) These participants shared their perspective on housing needs, issues, constraints, and opportunities in the City of Santa Clara. City of Santa Clara Planning Department staff and consultants facilitated the meetings.

It is important to recognize that the issues presented in this report do not necessarily represent of the community at large, or a comprehensive assessment of opportunities and challenges. Because only a small group was interviewed, the results cannot be generalized as the sentiments of the population at large. It is also important to recognize that information presented by the stakeholders reflects their perceptions. However, the valuable insight shared by the stakeholders is another dimension to inform the planning process for the General Plan Update.

REPORT ORGANIZATION

This report provides a summary of housing topics that discussed during the stakeholder meetings. Chapter 2 summarizes the major findings. Chapter 3 contains an expanded discussion of topics within four categories: housing needs, housing development constraints, housing opportunities, and potential housing policies and programs. These categories provide inputs for the topics required in the Housing Element. Chapter 4 indicates how this input will be used during the next steps of the planning process.

2 MAJOR FINDINGS

These major findings represent perspectives and concerns repeated by multiple participants in the stakeholder interviews. A more detailed discussion of these findings, as well as topics that resulted in less discussion, may be found in Chapter 3.

- **Affordability is an issue for all income levels.** Participants described housing needs for a variety of household income levels, including homeless individuals, extremely low-income families, and middle-income households looking for downpayment assistance.
- **Limited land supply constrains housing opportunities.** Flexibility for developers was identified as a means to promote housing development on the remaining sites.
- **Parking standards must be carefully crafted.** While the City may be motivated to reduce residential parking requirements, particularly in transit-rich areas, stakeholders cautioned the City about restricting these standards. Since parking can be a costly portion for new housing development and is often a contentious point for neighboring residents, it is important that parking standards be appropriate.
- **Neighborhood resistance must be addressed through collaboration.** Working with neighbors and community members to determine compatible design and densities, and appropriate parking standards, is essential to ensuring successful projects.
- **The housing community supports the City's housing programs.** Stakeholders support the City's existing housing programs, particularly the First-Time Homebuyers Program and Inclusionary Policy, which they believe have created new and better housing opportunities for low- and middle-income households. Stakeholders recommended expanding these programs.
- **An education program is a means to increase understanding and acceptance of new housing development.** Participants overwhelmingly agreed that better education and awareness programs for smart growth strategies, residential housing types, affordable housing design, and tenants and landlords' rights would benefit the community.

3 DISCUSSION TOPICS

Areas of discussion have been consolidated into four major categories: needs, opportunities, constraints, and recommended policies and programs.

HOUSING NEEDS

Stakeholders identified a range of housing needs within Santa Clara, suggesting that residents or potential residents of various ages, income levels, and special populations have unmet housing needs.

The need for more single-room occupancy units (SROs) was identified by several stakeholders. These small efficiency units typically serve persons with limited incomes, from homeless and transitional populations, to seniors and young people, just out of high school or college. Social services, or 24-hour desk coverage, can be provided to ensure the safety and assistance for residents as they transition to other accommodations. Stakeholders admitted that the stigma attached to this housing type could generate resistance for such a project. Successful SRO housing, however, already exists in Santa Clara. Successful examples also exist in San José and Mountain View, suggesting that neighborhood resistance may be overcome.

A couple of participants identified a need for transitional and permanent housing for youth. Housing for this target group can be accomplished through renovation of a single-family home for a few residents or through larger residences serving up to 20 youth. Participants identified a need for both transitional and permanent housing solutions. This type of housing requires on-site social and other support services.

While most stakeholders agreed that there is a need for more affordable housing overall, several stakeholders identified the greatest need among Extremely Low-Income populations—earning less than 50 percent of Area Median Income (AMI), or \$53,050 for a family of four. Stakeholders felt that households above 50 percent of AMI can usually find an adequate rental unit. Moreover, they noted that developers cannot qualify for tax credits for housing at affordability levels above 50 percent of AMI.

Participants also identified a need for housing to serve Middle-Income populations who, despite holding full-time jobs, are not able to afford the high rents and ownership prices of housing in Santa Clara. Even at incomes at or just above 120 percent of AMI (\$126,600 for a family of four), households struggle to keep up with market-rate rents and mortgage payments. Participants expressed concern that the professional class of middle-income wage earners, central to the workforce, is leaving the Bay Area and the State because of high housing costs.

Although constrained by limited land supply and high costs, stakeholders agreed that there is still a high demand for single-family homes (detached and attached), even on small lots.

Notably, seniors were not mentioned as a group with severe unmet housing needs. This may be due to the City's successful provision of more affordable senior housing in recent years. Stakeholders remarked that the process of gaining approvals is easier for senior housing, since community members tend to be more supportive. Stakeholders did,

however, express concern that seniors could be negatively impacted as prices continue to rise.

A few service providers and developers agreed that some special needs populations could be housed together. For example, developments could combine SRO and three-bedroom units to serve individuals and families, with a range of ages and income levels.

OPPORTUNITIES

Stakeholders identified several opportunities in the City of Santa Clara. Specifically, stakeholders suggested locations for new and higher-density development along current and potential transit and mixed-use corridors.

Mixed-Use Residential

Some stakeholders felt that current and potential residents of Santa Clara are becoming more interested in urban lifestyles and mixed-use neighborhoods, where housing is close to retail and neighborhood services. Participants stated that this phenomenon is particularly apparent among seniors looking for smaller, more accessible units and young people seeking vibrant neighborhoods close to jobs, schools and services. One participant suggested that the area around Mission College could be a prime location for development of a residential neighborhood to serve young professionals working nearby in Santa Clara like Mission Bay in San Francisco. Participants admitted that developing housing units at densities that could support retail and neighborhood services may not be achievable in Santa Clara given community resistance.

El Camino Real and Other Major Corridors

Several participants supported mixed-use residential development, potential for future transit-oriented higher densities and with affordability stipulations, along El Camino Real, because of its access and retail. One participant expressed concern that the financing and tenant mix could be difficult. Since many affordable developments already contain social service providers, libraries, or computer rooms, these uses could provide the ground-floor frontage on a street like El Camino Real.

At least one participant also saw opportunities along other major corridors in the City, such as Scott Boulevard, Lawrence Expressway, and San Tomas Expressway. Other streets, like Monroe Street, which contains more low-density housing, were seen as less appealing places for new higher density development because of potential incompatibility with adjacent single-family homes.

Density and Land Use

Stakeholders generally supported taller and higher-density development in Santa Clara south of the railroad tracks to avoid converting industrial land to residential uses as well as to avoid converting agricultural land in the Central Valley to urban uses. Keeping density in the Bay Area, where transit, infrastructure, and jobs already exist, was seen as a more efficient and sustainable option. While most stakeholders did not want to encroach on existing industrial and office uses, at least one stakeholder suggested that there could be opportunities in areas closest to existing residential neighborhoods, such as along Lafayette Street, north of the Caltrain tracks.

CONSTRAINTS

Stakeholders identified a series of constraints that could limit the City's ability to meet identified housing needs. Most of these constraints relate to the City's lack of available land, infrastructure capacity, high cost of living, existing regulations, and community resistance to new and higher-density development.

Land Supply

Stakeholders agreed that the City is constrained by its lack of available land for housing. The cost of un-entitled large infill sites makes available land financially prohibitive to acquire according to one participant. More affordable land is often on small or awkward-shaped parcels.

Infrastructure Capacity

Some stakeholders identified aging infrastructure and diminishing capacity as a constraint on the feasibility of new and higher-density housing. At least one stakeholder suggested that the burden should be shared across all new development projects—not just residential uses—and the City should be cautious about increasing fees.

Development Process

In general, the development process in Santa Clara was not identified as a constraint to residential development. Participants commended the City of Santa Clara for the professionalism of planning and housing staff as well as for the clarity and quality of policies and regulations. One shareholder explained that permits for their affordable housing project were obtained in six months.

Regulations

Impact Fees

Participants agreed that the City of Santa Clara's impact fees were reasonable and competitive with nearby cities.

Parking Requirements

Residential parking requirements—particularly the proper balance and ratio—was an important topic for many stakeholders. Developers want to provide residents with an adequate amount of parking, especially in family housing, where multi-generational households, with more than one vehicle, may reside. Developers expressed concern about lower parking ratios, particularly in transit-rich areas, due to potential neighborhood resistance. Stakeholders articulated the importance of getting the balance just right.

At least one stakeholder also expressed concern about unbundled parking (where residents are charged separately for parking and housing costs), since this practice has the consequence of creating additional costs for below-market purchase residents.

Zoning Code

A couple of stakeholders suggested that more flexibility in building heights and densities could expand the type of housing products. In addition, at least one stakeholder suggested

providing more flexibility under the Planned Development zoning to allow more variety in the types of mixed-use design and uses.

Other City Policies

One participant suggested that City policies were not always consistent across different departments—specifically that Housing Element policies were constrained by other policies within the City’s regulations. This stakeholder suggested that the City hold a developer roundtable with various employees from various City departments, offering the example of a similar event in San José. A roundtable could serve to both inform developers about the City’s policies and programs and to obtain feedback for policies for the General Plan Update.

Neighborhood Resistance

Several developers described the importance of, and their commitment to, working with residents in adjacent homes to ensure that development is compatible with existing neighborhoods and that neighboring residents are satisfied with the design, density, and parking requirements of their projects. Arriving at a project that satisfies all parties requires consistent meetings and communication with community members.

Housing Markets

Stakeholders identified three areas of the current housing market that may have an effect on residents in the City of Santa Clara: high home sales prices, increasing rents, and tightening mortgage lending practices.

One stakeholder acknowledged that with home values so high compared to the rest of the United States, most developments cannot qualify for federal subsidy programs. Some stakeholders suggested that rents are growing, increasing the burden on low and middle-income families. Some stakeholders remarked that vacancy rates have declined, further propelling the increase in rent prices.

Amidst the current mortgage market crisis, it has become more difficult to obtain mortgages. Although the City of Santa Clara has fared better than many other communities in the State, stakeholders cited that lenders are tightening their practices. Households with weaker credit ratings, less capital, and lower monthly incomes may have difficulty in securing a mortgage.

RECOMMENDED POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Affordable Housing Programs

Inclusionary Program

Stakeholders generally agreed that the City’s inclusionary program has been successful. They felt that the program works for developers and the City, increasing affordable housing for residents. The Below-Market Purchase component of the program provides a benefit of ownership through a five-year deferred loan with no interest. Some stakeholders suggested increasing the percentage of inclusionary requirement (currently at 10 percent), though they admitted that there could be resistance from developers for such a change.

First-Time Homebuyers Program

Participants generally praised the City's First-Time Homebuyers Program, and urged its continuance. Suggestions were to increase the funding amount and find additional ways to provide downpayment assistance for market-rate housing. According to stakeholders, this program, which provides up to \$75,000 toward a downpayment, is successful and encourages people to look for housing in Santa Clara, as opposed to other cities.

Long-Term Affordability

Some stakeholders encouraged the City to continue its policy of ensuring long-term affordability and to find ways to preserve units at risk of conversion to market rate.

Redevelopment Set-Aside

Developers have taken advantage of Redevelopment funds in order to provide affordable housing. One participant suggested a permanent set-aside above 20 percent, rather than the City's current policy to evaluate this requirement on a year-by-year basis.

Housing Trust Fund

Housing trust funds can help to finance affordable housing through loans and grants. The region has already initiated the Housing Trust Fund of Santa Clara County to this end. Stakeholders recommended building on this program and starting additional funds to help finance affordable housing efforts.

Other Subsidies

Some stakeholders suggested that in order to build more affordable housing, the City needs additional subsidies from local, State, and federal sources. One stakeholder explained that the development community recognizes the problem of affordability, but believes the burden should be shared and that the inclusionary policy should not be the only solution.

Zoning Code

Density Bonus

At least one developer of affordable housing has used the State density bonus that allows a 20 percent density increase.

Minimum Densities

One participant lamented the overall low-density at which some Santa Clara sites have been approved. Establishing minimum densities could ensure that appropriate sites were built at higher densities. One stakeholder recommended that the City consider density ranges for the General Plan Update.

Flexibility

Stakeholders requested additional flexibility to allow creative development on awkward-shaped or small parcels, as well as additional flexibility in the composition of mixed-use developments.

Green Building

Stakeholders generally liked more emphasis on green building opportunities within City policies.

Education and Awareness

The majority of stakeholders emphasized the importance of improving education and outreach efforts to help the community to better understand housing issues. For some stakeholders this meant making an effort to change how people perceive multi-family housing and higher densities. One participant encouraged the City to use the General Plan Update process as a tool for education.

A couple of stakeholders described the importance of distributing educational materials and program information in multiple languages. They suggested that often non-English speakers may be less likely to complain or understand their options. Notably, service providers already offer materials translated into foreign languages.

One stakeholder described programs in other cities that provide counseling to landlords, tenants, and homeless populations on housing regulations and other legal protections. The City of Santa Clara could institute such an education or counseling program through the City's Housing and Community Services Division or through a non-profit service provider. For example, given current housing market conditions, it may be appropriate for the City to offer a workshops or mediation services to help prevent foreclosures.

4 NEXT STEPS

The input gathered during the stakeholder interviews provides information for subsequent phases of the General Plan and Housing Element Update process. Stakeholders' first-hand knowledge and experiences are invaluable contributions toward the development of programs and policies that ultimately reflect the community's collective goals and visions.

The General Plan Steering Committee will consider the public input to date—from stakeholders and community workshops as well as from the upcoming survey—in formulating recommendations for the future of the City. Along with a technical assessment of opportunities and challenges, this input will serve as the foundation for land use and transportation alternatives for discussion at for future community workshops. Based on that community input, the Steering Committee will then consider alternatives for recommendations to the Planning Commission and the City Council.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

Name	Organization
Shiloh Ballard	Silicon Valley Leadership Group
Dixie Baus	CORE Companies
Chris Block	Charities Housing Development Corporation
Leatha Dewitt	Morley Bros., LLC
Lauren Doud	Silicon Valley Leadership Group
Martin Eichner	Project Sentinel
Ann Marquart	Project Sentinel
Shawn Milligan	KT Properties
Ed Moncrief	Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley (NHSSV)
Richard Warren	Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara
JR Wheelwright	Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley (NHSSV)
Judy Whittier	Bill Wilson Center

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COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #2 REPORT

City of Santa Clara | August 2008

City of Santa Clara

General Plan and Zoning Code Update

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I INTRODUCTION

This report describes a two-part workshop on environmental/sustainability and housing issues held on Monday, August 4, 2008. More than 55 community members participated in one or both portions of the workshop; the input will be used as input to subsequent phases of the General Plan Update process. This introductory chapter provides an overview of the project and the format of the workshop.

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING UPDATE PROJECT

One of the oldest communities in the Bay Area, the City of Santa Clara is imbued with a history that both defines the City and sets the standard for a high quality of life. Since the preparation of the last comprehensive General Plan in 1992, Santa Clara has continued to evolve dynamically, aided by its location in the heart of Silicon Valley. Today, Santa Clara is home to major global corporations, regional entertainment and convention facilities, multiple recreation facilities, excellent schools, and a well-connected transportation system. Santa Clara is also home to over 115,000 residents, a 21 percent increase in population since 1992.

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- Community workshops will cover various General Plan, Zoning and EIR related topics to synthesize issues, visions, and policies from the community at large. The Environmental and Housing workshops are described in this report.
- Citywide mail-in survey will be administered through a newsletter to solicit ideas and feedbacks for alternative planning scenarios.
- Key group outreach and neighborhood briefings will be held to provide information, discussion forums and presentations to community groups and organizations.
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WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

A two-part workshop—on environmental and housing topics—was held on Monday, August 4th at the Santa Clara Senior Center. Approximately 55 participants attended one or both of the workshops, with the majority of participants taking part in both sessions. Participants included residents, business representatives, and concerned persons.

Objectives and Structure

The purpose of the workshop was to give the public an opportunity to share ideas about various environmental and sustainability topics as well as to identify housing priorities and potential programs for the General Plan Update and EIR. The ideas gathered at the workshop will be summarized and presented to the General Plan Steering Committee in order to define the General Plan vision and policies.

The workshop agenda articulated the following objectives:

- To initiate a dialogue with community members about the environmental and sustainability priorities that should be addressed in the General Plan and EIR.
- Initiate a community dialogue around housing preferences, opportunities, and programs.

During each portion of the workshop, participants were asked to share ideas and concerns about relevant topic areas—such as recycled water and residential densities—that had emerged as key issues during the first community workshops. Participants provided their responses, then discussed their highest priority issues more deeply within small groups.

REPORT ORGANIZATION

This report explains the role of the community workshop as a tool in the planning process for preparing the City of Santa Clara General Plan Update. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 summarizes the results of the environmental and sustainability portion of the workshop and Chapter 3 summarizes the results of the housing portion of the workshop. Each of these chapters highlights the major themes that emerged from the group activities discussions. Chapter 4 summarizes comments shared outside of the community workshops—through the project website or directly with City staff. Lastly, Chapter 5 discusses next steps in the planning process.

Appendix C includes the detailed meeting agenda used to guide the workshops. Verbatim comments from the workshops are documented in Appendix A (Environment and Sustainability) and B (Housing) of this report.

2 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP RESULTS

MAJOR FINDINGS

Participants identified three major environmental issues as being paramount to address as the City continues to grow: energy, transportation, and water. Participants supported:

- Reduction in fossil-fuel energy sources, and instead developing renewable energy production—particularly solar energy production within the City. Participants also supported more education and outreach efforts to share information on energy demand and supply.
- Improvements to alternative transportation modes, specifically: the frequency, coverage, and affordability of transit service, and the development of a complete network of pedestrian and bicycles routes with essential services such as ample bicycling parking and safety measures. Participants encouraged alternative transportation throughout the City, to better connect people to major activity centers and reduce vehicle miles traveled and the associated air quality and traffic impacts.
- Better management of the water supply, specifically: encouraging reclaimed water use for landscaping and municipal activities that do not require potable water; educating the public on the process and use of reclaimed water; conserving water; and ensuring high-quality potable water supply.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Energy

Energy garnered the most comments during the workshop, with the majority of participants expressing support for alternative energy generation. In particular, community members supported solar energy production within the City—in parking lots, on solar farms, and on individual homes. Several participants also supported the use of nuclear power, presumably produced outside the City. Others recommended energy conservation measures for individual households and in new construction. A few community members identified the importance of educating the public about energy needs and sources, suggesting classes at local schools and colleges.

Air Quality and Traffic

Participants addressed air quality issues by identifying ways to reduce vehicle miles traveled and emissions. For some participants, air quality concerns represent a greater goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; for others air quality seems to be a quality of life concern that is a product of traffic and vehicle miles traveled. Regardless of the source of the concern, participants were united in wanting to see improvements in mass transit service and affordability (see Public Transportation section below), pedestrian and bicycle networks (see Bicycles and Pedestrians section below) and in the distribution of vehicle traffic distribution throughout the City. Others recommended traffic calming measures to reduce speeds. Several participants also proposed use of low-carbon or zero-emissions vehicles as part of the City's vehicle fleet and local buses.

Green Building

Many participants felt that new residences and businesses should be required to be green buildings. Support for green buildings seemed to include not only green building materials, but also appropriate siting and design, to capture natural sunlight and air flow. Some participants supported utilizing existing standards into the City's policy, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification and Energy Star ratings.

As a greater "green" land use strategy, participants supported vertical mixed use developments, where housing is situated above a ground-floor commercial space. In addition, community members prioritized higher-density development around transit hubs, to take advantage of transit access and reduce the need for vehicle travel for all trips.

Bicycles and Pedestrians

The majority of participants supported a complete network of trails and bike lanes to connect cyclists and pedestrians with major destinations throughout the City, such as schools and shopping services. Some community members suggested that certain amenities should be provided as part of this complete network and integrated into new development projects. Services suggested included ample bicycle parking and free compressed air at gas stations to pump up bike tires. Several participants highlighted the importance of safety. Some suggested that bike lanes be provided on different streets from cars or separated from vehicular traffic by concrete barriers. Other participants proposed pedestrian zones, reduced speed limits for vehicles, separate off-street pedestrian paths, and pedestrian bridges in high-density residential areas.

Public Transportation

Participants identified a need for frequency and service improvements in the public transportation system. Community members also supported free and subsidized transit through VTA's eco-pass program. Several participants supported the BART extension, while others did not. A few participants recommended adding a shuttle service—smaller, but more frequent than bus service—to better connect neighborhoods with local activity centers and other transit providers. Participants again supported low-carbon fuels or zero-emissions vehicles for the public transportation fleet of vehicles.

Parks and Open Space

Community members would like to see more parks and public plazas overall in the City, but were particularly supportive of trail connections. Building on the San Tomas Creek trail system, participants would like to see an expanded network of trails that connects to activity centers, and other trail systems, such as the Los Gatos Creek Trail. Some participants expressed support for more planting overall, to beautify the City and absorb CO₂ and some supported native and drought-tolerant plants in particular to reduce water needs (see Water section below). Several participants noted a lack of code enforcement of lawns in some residential neighborhoods and sought to prevent the paving over of lawns or hosting of illegal trailers.

Water

Participants prioritized better management of the water supply through reclamation, conservation, and on-site capture, recognizing water's status as a scarce natural resource. Most community members supported the use of reclaimed water throughout the City for landscaping and institutional needs. However, several highlighted the importance of education in helping people to understand how reclaimed water is processed and made safe. Several participants supported rain water capture on-site (e.g. through cisterns or green roofs) and ensuring overall water quality.

Other

An "Other" category was provided for participants to suggest additional ideas that were not related to the above categories. A variety of issues were mentioned, including graffiti, noise levels, and limited parking in highly-traveled areas. A couple of participants support a curb-side composting service, in addition to existing recycling services. Another participant supported the expansion of the City's communication infrastructure (e.g. fiber optic network).

3 HOUSING WORKSHOP RESULTS

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Overall, respondents welcomed new development of a City Center or Downtown in Santa Clara – a “heart” to the community, with restaurants, stores and housing. Participants supported the establishment of a natural and dynamic gathering place that would maintain the City’s historic identity.
- Several citizens expressed concern about continued residential growth, and, in particular, an increase in high-density developments. Respondents encouraged more in depth analysis of potential impacts on traffic, the environment, and public services, before the City supports new projects.
- A primary concern voiced by participants is how new housing is integrated within existing neighborhoods. They felt that preserving neighborhood character needs to be a core value of the City’s plan. Many respondents were unsure how high-density housing will fit in with of single-family neighborhoods.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Affordable Housing

Participants agreed on the necessity for affordable housing but expressed concern over the effect that new development could have on neighborhood character and property values. Respondents felt there was currently a gap between affordable housing and market-rate housing, in terms of density and design. They pointed to seniors and first-time home-buyers as most in need of affordable housing. Furthermore, participants suggested that new developments should strive for more moderate amenities over high-end appeal in order to address this need.

Density and Design

Density and design issues inspired the most active discussion among participants. Citizens expressed great concern about the preservation of existing neighborhoods and felt that a cohesive design for the transition between developments with different densities was critical. For example, participants felt strongly that new developments must integrate into the character of the Old Quad, even as residential densities increase. Fundamentally, some respondents questioned why there is such a push for high-density housing. They also asked about the potential impacts on Santa Clara from high-density housing developed in neighboring cities. Participants were skeptical about population and housing projections provided by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG).

A vision for smart growth evolved over the course of the meeting to include mixed-use, high-density development near transit and near major employers with quality ground-level retail and centralized services for residents. Many participants wanted to limit structures to four or five stories. Participants appreciated the design of townhomes near transit stations in Mountain View and Sunnyvale, suggesting those locations as good models for Santa Clara. Locally, most participants considered El Camino Real and the Mervyn’s center to be ideal locations for this kind of development.

Housing Location

Participants applied color-coded stickers (representing Low Density, Moderate Density, Medium-High Density, High Density development types) on a map of Santa Clara, to help define areas where different housing types would be appropriate. Most of the participants focused on the area surrounding the Santa Clara Station Area and the Old Quad. Medium-high to high-density development was popular near the train station and low-to-moderate density infill development was indicated for the Old Quad. A cluster of low- and moderate-density housing was centered at the Mervyn's site.

Notably, north of the Caltrain tracks, several distinct areas were selected for development. High-density development was placed along San Tomas Expressway and in the land currently leased to Great America. A couple of stickers representing low- and moderate-density housing were placed near the Sun Microsystems offices adjacent to the Montague Expressway.

In outlying areas of the City, high-density housing was proposed near the Lawrence Caltrain Station while a couple locations for medium-high density housing were suggested along Stevens Creek Boulevard at Saratoga Avenue.

In the group discussions that followed, participants noted that any plan for Santa Clara would need to define and improve the downtown area as a mixed-use destination. They pointed to Mountain View's downtown as a model and supported integrating medium-density housing into single-family neighborhoods, if well designed. Additionally, participants felt there was an opportunity to redevelop old apartment buildings.

Public Services

Parks and Open Spaces

Participants believed that new residential and commercial development must be balanced with new parks and open space. One participant encouraged the City to continue to work with developers to provide open spaces in new developments. Participants would like the City to improve access to existing and new parks through walking paths and bike lanes from residential neighborhoods. Residents raised the issue that new development could crowd streetscapes and open spaces and suggested greater setbacks for taller buildings to allow more space and sunlight for landscaping. Overall, they agreed that the preservation and creation of open spaces is an essential part of Santa Clara's desirability now and in the future.

Transportation Facilities

Participants expressed great concern for increased traffic from new high-density housing and commercial development. They fear that an increased population from high-density housing will exacerbate already congested streets. Many also felt that parking was already impacted in commercial areas and overflowing into residential streets. Residents supported a more current traffic study of the El Camino Real and Lawrence Expressway corridor and emphasized that the study of this area should consider the influence of growth from neigh-

boring communities. Residents expressed concern for pedestrian safety with busier streets and suggested that streetscapes be better designed for pedestrian safety and aesthetics.

Infrastructure

Many participants worried about the impact of new development on the City's existing water infrastructure. One participant suggested that new housing could be double-plumbed for recycled water use. Respondents supported increasing alternative energy resources as part of the City's infrastructure. They felt that Santa Clara was uniquely positioned to exploit solar and wind power, and that solar power should be a required component of new housing design. They also suggested that the City's fleet of service vehicles could be switched to alternative energy and that more police on bikes should be encouraged.

Schools

Residents advocated a plan for new housing that directly tied planned population growth to school capacity so as not to overwhelm the system. One commenter did not want portable structures as part of any new school buildings. Some participants suggested that schools supply their own energy with solar power.

City Programs

Participants requested new libraries and improved library services. They generally seemed to support the City's housing programs, provided that the character of the City's neighborhoods is retained. One commenter expressed high approval for workforce housing programs like the Santa Clara Unified School District's (SCUSD) Casa del Maestro housing development.

Other

Several responders requested that the agenda and associated informational material be posted ahead of time on the website to enable participants to better prepare for the workshops. One participant advocated a free City program for providing compost in order to encourage residents to grow their own food, interact with their community and utilize open spaces. Lastly, several participants noted the importance of coordinating with adjacent cities, recognizing that the City of Santa Clara has several proposals for high-density developments near the border or neighboring jurisdictions.

4 OTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS

Community members supplied additional comments outside the community workshop through the project website at www.santaclaragp.com and through direct communication with City of Santa Clara staff. Community members shared the following comments and concerns:

- Address the effects of population and residential growth on traffic congestion, parking availability (specifically mentioning the main library in Central Park), and general overcrowding in the City.
- Study the impacts of development on traffic, parking, and school overcrowding; including more detailed traffic studies in Sunnyvale and Santa Clara, as part of the EIR process, and communication with Caltrans, in particular, on proposed developments around El Camino Real and Lawrence Expressway.
- Determine additional school capacity needs and work with adjacent communities and school districts to determine where new schools are needed and who should bear the cost of new infrastructure.
- Consider current housing market decisions and determine whether demand exists for additional residential development. Maintain existing height and density standards to ensure that new developments are compatible with existing neighborhoods.
- Support a new, mixed-use Downtown, with restaurants, but limit heights to four stories. Concern about traffic congestion and overflow parking in the Old Quad.
- Improve residential streets by employing traffic calming measures, limiting cut-through traffic, and improving pedestrian and bicycle pathways and safety.
- Engage the community at the outset of the planning process. Encourage discussion of future needs rather than visions. Frame the discussion around planning for change, and how the City will respond to increased energy and food prices, global warming, the aging of our population, population growth, and other pressing issues.

5 NEXT STEPS

The input gathered at this community workshop provides input for subsequent phases of the General Plan Update process. At the environmental/sustainability and housing workshop, participants presented issues and ideas for Santa Clara's future. Their first-hand knowledge and experience are invaluable contributions toward the development of a General Plan that ultimately reflect the community's collective goals and visions.

The General Plan Steering Committee will consider the public input to date—from stakeholders and community workshops as well as from the upcoming survey in formulating recommendations for the future of the City. Along with a technical assessment of opportunities and challenges, this input will serve as the foundation for land use and transportation alternatives for discussion at future community workshops. Based on that community input, the Steering Committee will then consider alternatives for recommendations to the Planning Commission and the City Council.

APPENDICES

Appendix A and B contain the verbatim comments of the participants as posted on the walls of the workshop room in response to the brainstorm on environmental and housing topics, respectively. Appendix C includes the meeting agenda used to guide the workshops.

APPENDIX A: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP RESPONSES

Energy

- Decision-making should lean toward a carbon neutral environment.
- Reward energy conservation and CO₂ reduction.
- Mandate 10% better than Title 24 for all new buildings and renovations.
- More rebates and incentives for residents and businesses.
- Include nuclear power in "Sustainable." (2)
- SVP doing a great job. Give them more support and latitude to be innovative.
- Don't give "cushy" development agreements that won't fully develop until some indeterminate point in the future.
- Build nuclear power plants to increase solar farms.
- Alternative energy produced here vs. REC elsewhere.
- Codes should be more strictly enforced; specifically, arresting thieves who steal from our recycle bins each week; property owners who are allowed to leave garbage/furniture, etc. all over their front lawn should be fined heavily; unauthorized vehicles on blocks.
- Reduced power requirements, not "reduce your power so that we can have some left over for added thousands of high-density homes."
- Encourage more solar on private home's roofs and businesses.
- Evolve from opt-in program to default using green power.
- Create an SVP program that partners with employers to provide "solar covered parking" where people can "plug-in" their rechargeable vehicles. (Review Texas programs under review).
- Hold classes at the schools, especially colleges and have fines for waste.
- Support for solar energy.
- Encourage individual houses to change to solar.
- Create a SVP solar farm where SCLA residents can buy shares (panels) and apply power generated against their monthly bill. Use optimal (sun exposure) city space. Discourage residential solar (not attractive).
 - A typical residential solar installation generates <30% of power consumed and usually offends neighbors due to appearance issues.
- Incentives for solar power, especially on developments.
- Use SVP to better educate public on power needs and generation sources.
- Methane gas from garbage/waste.

- Imperative that Santa Clara City becomes energy independent (of fossil fuels). Become self-sufficient via renewable energy (solar/wind/etc). Need to set a goal. This would make us competitive in the carbon cap and trade era.
- All new buildings should be required to make their sun power at least 50% through solar, wind, passive solar, thermal.
- Eliminate carbon-based energy.

Air Quality and Traffic

- Consider a “timed” speed system to hit the next major stop light. (Similar to the one on major corridors in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona. (Work with County)
- Dense packed housing (see “The Enclave” at Pruneridge and Lawrence) are driving numerous fire-lane parking violations and intersection congestion. Better evaluate and measure future projects.
- Traffic calming in neighborhoods.
- Establish pedestrian zones with no cars.
- Better air and traffic quality, not just “meets the standard” or “is on the same level of badness.”
- Absolutely the number 1 issue is global warming. Cut greenhouse gas emission – carbon neutral, methane, etc.
- Plan for next generation vehicle power. All electric or hydrogen infrastructures.
- Require comprehensive traffic analysis before projects are approved. Current policies dramatically under-estimate traffic impacts.
- Put the traffic from El Camino Real to Homestead on the Keily Boulevard under the ground (tunnel). Make it a green zone. Expand central Park to other side of Keily (old Kaiser Hospital property).
- Free mass transit would alleviate traffic. Wider bike lanes to encourage people to get out of their cars. Incentives to businesses that have less cars on the road.
- Resident subsidy to obtain VTA “eco-pass” will encourage/increase public transit usage.
 - Perhaps require developers to contribute to such a fund for the right to develop in Santa Clara.
- Better distribute traffic burden throughout the City.
- Bus Route: More convenient routes to all neighborhoods. More buses go through train stations.
- Bus Power: Use only clean-power buses.
- Reasonable and safe traffic associated with any new development under consideration.
- Doubling the number of trees in the city would go a long way. Residential roads/streets can be shrunk for this purpose?
- We need a new transportation plan to move all these new people we are trying to bring in.

- More notification of neighborhoods of upcoming development/redevelopment to bring in more participation of community in planning it. Incentives to developers for promoting public input on their projects.
- City vehicle fleet – 0 emission.

Green Building

- Encourage development of higher density housing in transit-oriented locations in the city.
- Combine housing above/business below.
- Curb side composting is a waste of time. Not enough people will use it. It will create a rat problem outside and roach problem inside.
- Review codes and promotion of “basements,” or sub-grade living space. Stays cooler, keeps vertical, and “footprint” smaller.
- Include Green Buildings in new and future developments within the City.
- Require all new construction to be Green Buildings Platinum LEED Certified.
- Ditto → not just government buildings.
- And combine residences (above) with businesses below (less need to drive). More incentives (grants) for green remodeling/landscaping. Examples: free trees, whole house for rebate we now have.
- Windows that open to capture natural air flow.
- Architecture that encourages airflow. Make sure high density housing is properly sited for passive solar.
- Plant trees and surround high density with open space.
- Make recycling as convenient as possible.
- Mandates – Energy Star, etc.
- Create incentives for Green Houses or such gadgets.
- Less building and few buildings, not just “Green Buildings.”

Bicycles and Pedestrians

- More official “bike roads” where a bike can use a whole lane. Bike lanes still do not connect everywhere – this should be a priority.
- Trail and bike systems that can take you to work, school and markets.
- “Yellow-bike” program like the one in Portland, Oregon.
- Build more pedestrian zones, provide better paths to get from one place to another.
- Look at Copenhagen:
 - Public plaza for bike parking.
 - Bike land and sidewalk both separated from road by a curb.

- Connect bike trail from San Tomas Creek trail to Los Gatos Creek trail.
- Increase commute corridors for bikes.
- Create safe commute corridors for workers and students. There are too many speeders and traffic injuries/deals with conventional bike lanes.
- Bicycle and pedestrian friendly without trying to eliminate the need for cars, because businesses and jobs will require them.
- Bikes and pedestrians should be integrated into developments, not added on. For example, parking facilities.
- Safer and better connected bike lanes throughout the city.
- Seriously consider impacts of pedestrian traffic on safety and vehicular traffic flow.
 - Consider pedestrian bridges near denser developments.
- Safe bike lanes.
 - Citations given to auto drivers who endanger bike riders and pedestrians.
- More lanes and trails.
- Make sure gas stations offer free access to compressed air per gallon.
- Close some lesser traveled streets to become bike only lanes.
- When will the master bike trail be completed?
- Separate bike lanes from street traffic using hedges, or “parking strips.”
- Bike racks where you can safely leave a bike. Needs to be in front of all public buildings and businesses.

Public Transportation

- Bring BART.
- Regular, reliable transit, with good connections.
- Don't pay for BART.
 - Santa Clara bus.
 - Free shuttle that runs between key restaurants and shopping. For example up and down El Camino and Franklin Mall to Mercado.
- “Public transportation” should not stand alone. Integrate public and private transportation.
- More hybrid vehicles for public transportation.
- Public transit that works with existing cars and people's needs, not just where we would like them to go.
- Goal: no need for an auto for normal business, such as work.
- Provide public transportation to city center as hub then hook in with airports, bus and train stations.

- Smaller, more frequent vans instead of buses → Ditto.
- Free mass transit to encourage riders.
- Incentives for people who use mass transit.
- Close smaller residential streets (like Kaiser Drive) for heavy and noisy vehicles. Put bumps on such streets and install signs.
- Extend BART around the Bay ASAP.
- Public transportation that connects to each other, not just places.
- Use of public transportation should be encouraged even though economy is bad.
- Add any public transportation (BART, monorail, bus) to transit between San Jose/Santa Clara and San Francisco. Any addition to the Cal Train will help and lower the city traffic: air, city, etc.
- Developer and City subsidy for CTA "eco-passes" for residents. I've done the math, it's not cost effective to take public transportation without it, even with gas at \$4.50+/gallon. Or give passes away to encourage VTA.
- Traffic calming in neighborhoods.
- Make eco-passes available to all Santa Clara residents.
- In an ideal world, everyone would take public transportation such as BART. However, the existing BART has yet to pay off its initial investment, thus making BART not fiscally sound for our community today.
- Better distribute public transit through city, not just on a few streets.

Parks and Open Space

- I would like to see more small green spaces/parks with benches similar to the old bandstand area by the old library.
- People should not be allowed by the city to have relatives live in a trailer/RV in their backyard – this is not fair to neighbors who live where they can see it. One address in the City has relatives living in a huge RV several months straight each year.
- Refrain from giant plastic play structures in parks that look like McDonald's. Fremont Park is an example of what not to do.
- Motor homes, trailers, RV's, should not be allowed to be used for living areas and should be completely out of sight from their neighbors. This is a growing problem and a blight on the city's neighborhoods.
- Should enforce law of required green landscaping and heavily fine residents who concrete/brick over their front or backyards.
- Maximize all to absorb CO₂.
- Open Saratoga Creek so that local residents can help keep it free from loitering.
- Use phony grass and drought resistant plants – also more community gardens that pay for themselves.
- Utilize Kaiser Hospital property as extension of the Central Park.

- Utilize creeks for bike and waking trails. Connect these trails to each other and to service and shopping areas.
- Would like to see Santa Clara have one of the premier trails systems in Bay Area. I run every weekend and every weekend I get in my car and go to other cities' trails and spend my money and time there. Improve trail system.
- What trails? Having a trail that could link to Los Gatos Creek Trail or some other beautiful outdoor destination would be great!
- Trails along creeks through city for bikes, pedestrians use drought tolerant native plants in schools and parks require native plants in new constructions.
- Cooperative projects with school districts and open space of other cities, etc.
- Ensure zoning and rezoning codification is transparent.
- More trails and green space.
- City take control over the Creek at the Central Park. Maintenance is required.
- Public plazas with outdoor seating for restaurants, etc.

Water

- Laws (do they exist?) for new development to send rainwater to dumps for recharging aqua firs (if not caught for use).
- Water should be a regional issue, not city stand alone.
- Extended lines of recycled water for residential use or use of recycled water through systems installed in homes.
- Potable water must be of highest quality and purity.
- Use of recycled water for landscaping should be maximized.
- Protect our water supply – Santa Clara has a wonderful system. Don't lose it.
- All public parks and schools use "gray water" for landscaping.
- Program to report problems and optimize landscape watering.
- Enable consumer tracking of consumption between billing cycles.
- Too hard to use reclaimed water – too many rules, jurisdictions, and unknowns.
- Get rid of reclaimed water myth that it is dangerous. We need to encourage, not discourage use.
- Only recycled water used at parks, schools educate residents on how to reduce water use.
- Rain barrels?
- Extend use of recycled water as much as possible keeping in mind public health. (2)
- More education on water conservation and incentives. People don't know how to use sprinkler systems.
- Rain water harvesting roofs.

Other

- Graffiti.
- More parking for highly-traveled areas; logical ratios, not just reduced ratios.
- Water supply
 - Management, long-term procurement, and storage alternatives (aquifers?)
- Make it difficult to grant waivers for noise levels.
- Curbside composting.
- Can we make Santa Clara City self-sufficient when it comes to basic staple food/water? Water is going to be next on foot shortage and hence rising prices can be expected in future. We can shield ourselves if we are self-sufficient. Suggestions to set aside land for community farming.
- Communication infrastructure, like fiber-optic core.
- Community-free composting location to improve yards. For example, Los Altos has for free.

APPENDIX B: HOUSING WORKSHOP RESPONSES

Affordable Housing

- (Regarding Myth #5) The housing built on San Tomas at Rivermark stands out like a sore thumb and was not designed to match the original architecture of Rivermark. If that trend is continued I don't want to see it
- Why should people that made an early financial sacrifice to own their own home deny others the opportunity to stretch a dollar and have to pay and financially suffer twice?
- I think many of the myths are true and the "facts" provided are simply qualifiers. Don't use the facts to displace the concern but rather help resolve the concerns; eg Myth #5 isn't debunked here. The fact simply states that efforts can be made to diminish the concern "myth" as you call it.
- (Regarding Myth #1) We want affordable housing to be seamlessly integrated into neighborhoods.
- (Regarding Myth #5) High-density is/will be a troublesome but necessary piece of future housing solutions.
- Lovely well-designed high-density housing above shops would make much better use of El Camino than current, rundown, empty strip malls. This would also increase mass transit usage.
- Allocate affordable housing throughout City equally
- Affordable housing should be located close to mass transit to help parking issues
- Like to see some way to incentivize for-profit developers to build affordable housing
- There needs to be affordable housing bridging the gap between the identified low-income qualifiers and regular housing. Working with developers and construction companies to maintain quality yet not necessarily higher-priced amenities that contribute to the overall higher prices.
- Do the planners listen to residents or just read these comments and think 'Ho Hum'? Do residents' comments make a difference in these times?

Density and Design

1)

- Should be well-separated from single-family residential
- Near BART
- This is awful (seconded)
- Does not belong in Santa Clara
- Don't go there – too big
- Or if you there, do it in Old Quad/Downtown...near SC Transit Center

2)

- Truly without any architectural qualities!
- Yuck!

3)

(No responses)

4)

- Looks like the type of housing that should be built near our “new” downtown to support SCU population
- Awful!
- Too high, too boxy

5)

- Two to Three-story apartments/condos work well in many SC city settings
- This is nice when near BART/”Benton-Lafayette “new” downtown” or on El Camino
- Two to Three-story ok in many locations. Like the mix. Good among large developments of like housing

6)

- I like this the best – nicely done, will fit in even with older historic areas.
- Good residential style, ie similar to the single-family designs; doesn’t stand out as “different”; good exposure – safety/crime concerns
- Fits in best with current neighborhoods – most important to have new construction in keeping with current neighborhoods
- A look we recognize
- Nice, but I’m sick of single-family housing being slammed together with no land to separate or have open feeling (2)
- I visit similar places in Mountain View and I get sick with thing being so close together; so much for personal space in the future.
- Can these be duplex or 4-plex
- Needs solar added and other attributes of green building; native plants; permeable surfaces

7)

- Near BART or other transit
- No! Too compacted, too high. Does not promote community.

8)

- Works well with the existing single-family neighborhoods

- A nice look for Old Quad area
- Nice look but how about some smaller options
- Looks nice, functional. Hope they fit in with nearby housing
- This looks like those awful four homes nearby built in the Old Quad on Monroe/Homestead. They ruin the streetscape and look really cheap

9)

- Also a nice look for Old Quad area
- Interesting design; appropriate height for most locations

Other Comments

- Why aren't there any lower-density designs?
- "The Enclave" and the development across the street at Pruneridge and Lawrence are problematic. "The Enclave" is approximately half-full and fire-lane parking violations are daily. Far too many driveways between Chevron, apartments and the two developments.
- I think they all look very much "out" of Santa Clara character – do you intend to put these in Downtown Santa Clara? – I bet not.
- Most newer homes are too close and you can't turn your car the drive or street
- Like to see mixed-use developments
- Where is the "housing above shops" option?
- High-density means high buildings that cast shadows – why not pyramid-shaped buildings?
- Any new housing design should fit in with designs in existing housing the particular neighborhood. Any design new to Santa Clara should be built only where there is no existing residential neighborhood. The preservation of existing neighborhoods is most important to Santa Clarans I have spoken with
- Mixed-use housing builds small communities and cuts down need to drive
- Single-family homes should be built on no less than 6000 square feet. Otherwise let's just call it a townhome, condo or "micro-home". Real neighborhoods with more space are more appealing.
- I want housing that looks like the housing that's already here
- High-density = more issues = more stress. Not necessarily more money
- High-density = more traffic = more congestion = more school crowding
- High-density should also be green. Roof -> solar; yards -> native plants; parking -> permeable surfaces; community garden
- Integrate housing with water collection, broadband communication, transportation, etc

- Allowing 2500 square foot houses on 4000 square foot lots with families or groups with 4-plus cars and one 2-car garage (no driveway) is ludicrous
- It is easy to "justify" higher-density development, but we should protect single-family, larger lot homes (where they still exist) and while they still exist. Also preserve neighborhood types that currently exist.
- Consider more mixed-use near BART/CalTrain ; Housing on top/businesses below – like Santana Row but less pricey/exclusive (2)
- Model of this could be at NE corner of Stevens Creek and Lawrence

Housing Location

- Hopefully the City of Santa Clara avoids ghettoizing "projects"
- None of these should be allowed in the Old Quad
- The 'red' architecture is in keeping with Spanish or "Mission"-style and as we are the "Mission City" this works well. It was nicely done recently across from the Taco Bell one block in from El Camino
- Please don't continue to encourage the yellow architectural style – builders here don't do this well and they end up looking very cheap and like shabby old houses
- The blue and green are both not very pleasing to look at. I am also against any structure over four stories tall in the Old Quad. I make an exception for Lafayette/Benton area
- Keep neighborhoods stable, single-family neighborhood can be destroyed by inappropriate mixture. Don't be exclusive, but keep the neighborhood impact in mind w/ nearby affordable housing (unless some of the efforts can be making some those housing single-family detached)
- The Laurelwood area has a usually high amount of medium-to-high-density housing already. The already approved and demoed size near Lawrence and El Camino will have impacts. The new proposed Santa Clara Square pushes it beyond reasonable limits. This development needs to go to elsewhere.
- I don't see housing above shops. El Camino would be perfect for high-density housing, three or four floors above shops. Destroy all those old ugly stores on El Camino
- New housing density should take into account existing housing (ie build lower level housing if adjacent to existing one-story homes) and traffic, schools, environmental impact more than generally done
- A master plan that includes the above must be developed and followed without exceptions for individual projects
- Housing growth needs to be coupled to schools and real estate purchase to support school growth
- Santa Clara needs to consider neighboring city land use (high-density housing, schools, parks) and distribute the use of all of these (be a good neighbor)
- New developments are built too close together; they do not appear to have safe emergency access, ie Homestead Road new developments; unattractive developments; no green buildings, solar power, etc

- More and more active involvement of neighborhoods where new growth/buildings are being considered. This starts with specific notice to a much wider area when a specific project is being proposed and voted on.
- Santa Clara must be a good neighbor and seek agreement from the neighboring cities on any plans for high-rise/high-density housing
- Time for mixed-housing use (residence and stores) - forms easy access to stores - cuts down on traffic need. Santa Clara is large - needs multiple small communities which include access to basic services (ie food)
- Growth okay - do it smart. If not in Bay Area then we perpetuate issue of long commutes and loss of farm land and open space

Public Services

Parks and Open Spaces

- Consider neighborhood park care programs that involve residents; sprinklers flooding little league fields on Saturdays....it is too hard to work the way through Parks & Schools to get things fixed
- Repair the terrible concrete at Westwood Oaks Park
- Review and revise the "no" signs at the parks (No: Bikes, Skateboards, Roller skates, Baseball, Fun). They are not realistic and do not fit needs
- Clean up Central Park Pond!
- Bike access to parks
- Continue to require major developers to contribute open space/park land
- Open spaces shared by all residents; limit non-resident use
- Better distribute open space/parks in city
- Encourage open space within walkable distance from housing
- The more open space that is saved in Santa Clara will bring up the desirability to live in our city
- Would love to see more small parks/green spaces with benches to encourage neighbors to walk/chat

Environmental Impacts

- City's vehicle fleet powered entirely via alternative energy
- Encourage more police on bikes; electric vehicles powered by solar
- High-density housing without a planned community with retail, restaurants, etc such as Santana Row will lead our residents to get into their cars, pollute the air, and spend our disposable income in every other city other than our own.

Infrastructure

- Solar energy; pedestrian-friendly streets

- Solar power; wind power
- Get to solar across the city
- Double-plumb new construction for recycled water use
- Require useful DSL speeds for new developments. In many areas today there is no competition for Comcast
- High-density housing leads to high-density-packed roads. No one wants to sit at an intersection that requires one to wait multiple "greens" before being able to cross.
- Mixed-use housing creates community and cuts down transportation needs
- Have a current study done on traffic on El Camino and Lawrence not one that dates back "8" years!
- (Seconds above comment) That considers near- and long-term plans from neighboring cities (Santa Clara Square and Sunnyvale)

Schools

- Ensure consistent containment & security of students at schools. Most Santa Clara schools have a high % of perimeter fencing while Eisenhower at Mayowood Park has none. Nearby creek is not secure either.
- Consideration of school impact and its related cost when increased population is being courted and new buildings being approved.
- Work harder to maintain strong partnership between school district and city
- Developers and new residents need to pay for new school structures (capital outlay)
- School buildings energy provided on site by solar power
- Environmental studies taught in schools
- Synchronize school district boundaries with city boundaries for more efficient management of funding, eg current San Jose/SCUSD issue
- City funds used by School district not serving some city communities
 - grants
 - teacher housing
- Improve accuracy of student generation numbers
- Improve SC high school standards
- New school, Don Callejon, being utilized by Alviso seems unfair
- I want my children, who live in Santa Clara, to benefit from a new school
- The lottery system for Washington and Milikin is hindering the improvement of neighborhood schools
- The expansion of existing Schools via "portable" buildings is wrong. Cities sell public land to developers is short-sighted and hurts the community in the long run

City Programs

- Does this program distinguish between, or have provisions for, “critical skills” necessary for sustainability (bus drivers, hairdressers, cooks, etc). Maybe it should
- Will these programs respect/guarantee the integrity of the architecture of individual neighborhoods? This is critical to keeping Santa Clara the wonderful place to live that it has been for so many years.
- The program for teachers (“Del Maestro”?) is a great concept

Other

- This forum, 25 minutes, to provide thoughtful, in-depth, intelligent comments (like last time) is not sufficient. Would’ve been nice if you’d publish these topics ahead of time so we could come prepared. (4)
- Preservation of historic neighborhoods!
- Library (north side)
- Police presence and enforcement needs support
- Soil improvement (with compost that is “free”) encourages home gardening (veg/fruit) which is self-sustainable

APPENDIX C: WORKSHOP AGENDA



CITY OF SANTA CLARA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



Community Workshop - August 4, 2008

Environment/Sustainability: 6:00 – 7:00 PM

Housing: 7:00 – 9:00 PM

**Santa Clara Senior Center
1303 Fremont St.
Santa Clara, CA 95050**

Meeting Objectives

- To initiate a dialogue with community members about the environmental and sustainability priorities that should be addressed in the General Plan and EIR.
- Initiate a community dialogue around housing preferences, opportunities, and programs.

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome (Carol Anne Painter, City Planner) - 5 min.
 - Purpose of Workshop and Agenda
2. Workshop Introduction (Rajeev Bhatia, Principal – Dyett & Bhatia) - 5 min.
 - Environmental Input into General Plan
3. Individual Activity—Ideas and Priorities - 20 min.
4. Individual Activity Results (Dyett & Bhatia and City Staff) – 5 min.
5. Group Discussion—Top Priorities - 15 min.
6. Next Steps for the General Plan/EIR (Rajeev Bhatia) - 5 min.
7. Transition to Housing Portion – Refreshments, Setup and New Arrivals – 10 min.
8. Introduction to Housing (City Staff) – 20 min.
 - Housing in the General Plan
 - Existing City Housing Policies and Programs (Jeff Pederson)
 - Q & A
9. Individual Activity—Housing Stations – 25 min.
10. Individual Activity Results (Dyett & Bhatia and City Staff) – 10 min.
11. Group Discussion—Top Priorities – 20 min.
12. Conclusion and Door Prizes (Carol Anne Painter) - 10 min.

PREPARED BY

DYETT & BHATIA
Urban and Regional Planners

Housing Element Primer

This document describes the purpose and process of preparing a housing element. The first section provides a brief overview. The second section describes the process for preparing a housing element, including the required components and certification process.

I HOUSING ELEMENT OVERVIEW

GOAL

The goal of the Housing Element is to facilitate the production of housing of various types at all income levels.

THE BASICS

- One of seven required General Plan elements
- Generally must be updated every five years; therefore runs on a different schedule than the General Plan Update
- Jurisdictions are not obligated to produce housing units, but must show the opportunities for the construction of housing for all income groups are present

2 PROCESS

REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION (RHNA)

Given the lack of sufficient affordable housing options across much of California, the State has prioritized increasing the housing supply. The State requires each city and county to identify a sufficient amount of land to accommodate its “fair share” of the housing need. The Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA, pronounced “REENA”) process, managed by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), assigns each region a number representing the amount of housing needed, for all income groups, based on existing need and expected population growth. Regional agencies (such as the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)) must then create methodology and publish the RHNA allocation that gives a portion of the regional RHNA to each jurisdiction in the region.

City of Santa Clara’s RHNA

Santa Clara’s regional housing needs allocation for the 2007-2014 planning period is described in the table below. Definitions for each income level are based on Area Median Income (AMI), a County-level assessment of household income, published by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. For the City of Santa Clara, AMI is equal to \$105,500 per year for a four-person household.

Income Level	Very Low (<50% AMI)*	Low (50-80% AMI)	Moderate (80-120% AMI)	Above Moderate (>120% AMI)	Total
Regional Housing Needs Allocation	1,293	914	1,002	2,664	5,873

Source: Association of Bay Area Governments

*Half of these units need to be affordable to extremely low-income households earning no more than 30% AMI.

HOUSING ELEMENT PREPARATION

Program Accomplishments

The Housing Element Update builds on the existing Housing Element, drawing lessons learned from its successes and failures to improve the updated Element. This step includes an assessment of the:

- Effectiveness of the Element
- Progress in Implementation
- Appropriateness of Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Housing Needs Assessment

This step includes identification and analysis of the particular housing needs of the City of Santa Clara community. State housing law lists the topics that the Housing Element must discuss including:

- Demographics;
- Housing Characteristics;
- Ability to Pay and Overpayment;
- Overcrowding;
- Substandard Conditions;
- Special Housing Needs (including elderly, persons with disabilities, large families, female-headed households, farmworkers, and homeless);
- Existing Assisted Housing, Housing Resources, and Assisted Housing at Risk of Conversion to Market Rate; and
- Projected Housing Needs (including Santa Clara's share of the regional housing need—RHNA).

Land Inventory

The purpose of the land inventory is to identify specific sites suitable for residential development, at each income level. The Element must define and explain the development capacity for each site. This analysis is the basis for demonstrating the opportunities for housing construc-

tion that could serve projected residents at each income level. There are two key components of this analysis:

- Site Inventory (vacant, underutilized, or soon to be rezoned properties)
- Site Suitability (infrastructure capacity, environmental constraints)

Constraints

This step requires an examination of potential and actual constraints to the maintenance, improvement or development of the different housing types for all income levels. The analysis must consider governmental, as well as non-governmental factors such as:

- Governmental Constraints (e.g. zoning regulations, fees, permit review procedures)
- Non-Governmental Constraints (e.g. availability of financing, land and construction costs, environmental conditions such as flood plains,)

Housing Goals, Policies and Programs

The Housing Element must include goals and policies as well as a program of specific actions to meet the identified needs, remove or reduce constraints, preserve existing units, and develop affordable housing. If the jurisdiction cannot identify sufficient sites to meet the RHNA at present, it must establish a program to identify sites to meet the balance of the community's share of the regional need during the planning period. If such a program is necessary, it typically includes to the process to implement appropriate zoning and development standards to encourage increased housing production at each income level. These standards could include establishing minimum densities, reducing parking requirements, or streamlined project review standards.

This phase should identify:

- General Goals and Policies;
- Implementation Actions (including housing programs);
- Responsible Agencies;
- Funding Sources;
- Monitoring and Evaluation; and
- Implementation Schedule.

Quantified Objectives

This part of the Housing Element includes an estimate of the maximum number of units, by income level, that the City could theoretically build during the planning period. This step reflects the housing needs, land and financial resources, constraints analysis, and implementation of policies and programs. The Quantified Objectives will identify the number of units—at each income level—that could be produced through new construction, as well as through rehabilitation and conservation, or preservation of existing housing stock.

CERTIFICATION BY HCD

Because housing has been deemed a need of statewide importance State law requires that cities and counties submit their housing elements to HCD for review. HCD will provide written findings stating whether the draft housing element complies with the State law and, if not, what changes are needed. If the jurisdiction adopts the Housing Element without making the changes proposed by HCD, it needs to include written findings explaining the reasons why it believes the Element does comply with the requirements. HCD's determination of compliance with State law is called certification. Certification is not required but under California law a certified element is presumed to comply with the State requirements in the event of a legal challenge.

DRAFT OUTLINE FOR SANTA CLARA GENERAL PLAN EIR

Proposed Chapters

Responsibility¹

Executive Summary

D&B

Summary of Proposed Project

- Key Features
- Estimated Buildout

Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation

Alternatives Descriptions

- Summary of Project Alternatives
- Comparative Impact Analyses
- Environmentally Superior Alternative

Summary of Areas of Controversy and Other CEQA Considerations

Summary Table of Impacts

I Introduction, Background, and Project Objectives

D&B

1.1 Purpose and Use of the EIR

- CEQA Requirements
- Lead and Responsible CEQA Agencies
- Intended Use of the EIR (Agency and Public Use of EIR)
- Level of Environmental Review Provided by this EIR

1.2 General Plan Process and Public Involvement

1.3 Approach and Assumptions

1.4 Issues Addressed in the EIR

1.5 Documents Incorporated by Reference

1.6 Organization of EIR

2 Project Description

D&B

2.1 Introduction and Background

2.2 Regional Location and Planning Area

2.3 Purpose and Objectives of the Proposed General Plan Update (including Housing Element Update)

2.4 Project Components

- Key Initiatives/Themes/Guiding Policies

- General Plan Land Use Diagram and Land Use Classifications
 - Buildout Under the Proposed General Plan (including assumptions used for calculating buildout)
- 2.5 Key Policies of Plan
- 2.6 Key General Plan Changes
- Summary of changes of new General Plan, (focused on land use designations)
- 2.7 Implementation of the Proposed General Plan

3 Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation

INTRODUCTION

Assumptions used in analysis

Impact Classifications

Organization of each section

Discussion in each section will include:

- Environmental Setting (Existing Conditions and Regulatory Setting)
- Significance Criteria and Methodology (LOS identification)
- Summary of Impacts
- Impact Analysis (Numbered impacts linked to significance criteria; Policies that reduce potential impacts; and Mitigation measures, if necessary)

3.1 Land Use	D&B
3.2 Aesthetics and Visual	D&B
3.3 Transportation and Traffic	F&P
3.4 Noise and Vibration	J&S
3.5 Air Quality	D&B
3.6 Energy	J&S
3.7 Climate Change	D&B
3.8 Hydrology and Flooding	J&S
3.9 Public Utilities (Solid Waste, Electrical, Gas, Water Supply, Wastewater, and Telecommunications)	D&B
3.10 Public Services (Fire, Police, Schools, and Libraries)	D&B
3.11 Open Space Parks, Trails and Recreation	D&B
3.12 Biological Resources	J&S
3.13 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity	J&S
3.14 Hazards and Hazardous Materials	J&S
3.15 Cultural Resources	D&B
3.16 Population, Jobs and Housing (may also be covered in Growth Inducing Impacts)	D&B

(Note: This section would focus on displacement of people and housing. Growth Inducing Impacts are discussed in Section 5.)

4 Consistency with Adopted Plans

D&B

- 4.1 SC County Congestion Management Program
- 4.2 ALUC Plan
- 4.3 SCV Urban Run-off
- 4.4 SCU WMP
- 4.5 Bay Area Clean Air
- 3.7 Others??

5 Impact Overview

D&B/J&S/F&P

- 5.1 Growth-Inducing Impacts
- 5.2 Significant Irreversible Changes
- 5.3 Significant Unavoidable Impacts
- 5.4 Cumulative Impacts (including pending projects as applicable)
- 5.5 Less-than-Significant Impacts

6 Alternatives Analysis

Discussion of each alternative will include:

- Rationale for selecting alternative; (Alternatives should avoid or mitigate significant impacts on the environment, relative to proposed project and accomplish basic project objectives)
- Description of major characteristics of alternative; (How alternative differs from proposed project)
- Alternatives evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project
- Cumulative effects of each alternative

6.1 Alternatives Approach

D&B

- Process and Identification of Alternatives (including those screened from analysis)

6.2 Alternatives Evaluated in the EIR

D&B

- No Project
- Alternative A
- Alternative B
- Alternative C

6.3 Comparison of Alternatives

D&B/J&S/F&P

6.4 Environmentally Superior Alternative

D&B

- 7 References** D&B/J&S/F&P
- 8 Acronyms and Abbreviations** D&B/J&S/F&P
- 9 EIR Authors and Organizations/Persons Consulted** D&B/J&S/F&P
- 10 DRAFT EIR Distribution List**
- 11 Appendices** [Responses to NOP, Detailed Traffic Analysis, Noise, Air Quality, Biology, Geotechnical, Hydrology, Hazardous Materials, WSA, Utilities Will to Serve Letters, Greenhouse Gas Emissions (calculations), Urban Water Management Plan, etc.]

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1

¹Responsibility

D&B: Dyett & Bhatia *

F&P: Fehr and Peers *

JS: Jones & Stokes *

NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP)
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)
CITY OF SANTA CLARA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Date: August 26, 2008

To: Responsible Agencies, Interested Parties and Organizations

Subject: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the City of Santa Clara General Plan Update and Scheduling of a Scoping Meeting at 6 p.m., September 17, 2008

Project Title: City of Santa Clara General Plan Update

Location: City of Santa Clara, California

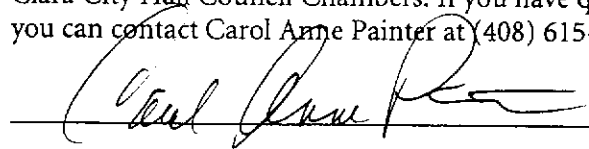
Case Files: CEQ2008-01070, PLN2008-07267

The City of Santa Clara is preparing a General Plan Update (including a Housing Element Update), and has determined that a comprehensive Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be necessary. The City of Santa Clara requests your input regarding the scope and content of environmental analysis that is relevant to your respective agency's statutory/regulatory responsibilities in order to ascertain potential impacts of the proposed project. The City of Santa Clara, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will direct the preparation of an EIR for the project. The project description is provided in the attached Notice of Preparation (NOP).

Although specific proposals and revisions for the Santa Clara General Plan and Housing Element have not yet been determined, we are soliciting your comments. This will allow your input to be taken into consideration during formulation of the environmental effects to be addressed in the EIR. A description of the proposed action, location map, and preliminary identification of the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b) mandates each Responsible Agency to respond to an NOP within thirty days (30) after receipt. The review period will extend from August 28, 2008 through September 27, 2008. Your views and comments on how the project may affect the environment are welcomed. Please send your written response, with the name of your agency contact person, to the following address: Carol Anne Painter, City of Santa Clara Planning Division; 1500 Warburton Avenue, Santa Clara, CA 95050.

A community meeting on environmental issues was conducted on Monday, August 4, 2008, to solicit public input. A Scoping Meeting will be conducted at 6 p.m. on September 17, 2008, at the Santa Clara City Hall Council Chambers. If you have questions regarding this NOP or the Scoping Meeting, you can contact Carol Anne Painter at (408) 615-2450.



Carol Anne Painter, City Planner
City of Santa Clara

8-27-08
Date

NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP)
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)
CITY OF SANTA CLARA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

1. PROJECT TITLE:

City of Santa Clara General Plan Update

2. LEAD AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS:

City of Santa Clara
Planning Division
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050

3. CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE NUMBER:

Carol Anne Painter
City Planner
(408) 615-2450
CAPainter@santaclaraca.gov

4. PROJECT LOCATION:

The City of Santa Clara, located at the center of California's Silicon Valley, covers an area of 18.2 square miles. The City is situated between San José to the north, east, and south, and Sunnyvale and Cupertino to the west (Figure 1). Additionally, the Norman Y. Mineta International Airport borders the City to the east. With a 2008 population of 115,500, it is the third largest city in Santa Clara County.

Highway 101 passes east-west through the northern portion of the City, while Highway 237 borders the north. Interstates 880 and 280 skirt the southeast and southwest corners of the City, respectively. The City is also served by transit, including: the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Light Rail along Tasman Drive in the northern portion of the City; and the Santa Clara Transit Center, with Caltrain, Altamont Commuter Express (ACE, which currently bypasses the station due to construction), VTA bus lines, and future BART, Capitol Corridors, and Automated People Mover services. On the City's north side, the Great America Train Station serves ACE, the Capitol Corridors and Amtrak, with pedestrian connections to the Tasman Light Rail line.

The Proposed Planning Area comprises all land within the City limits. The existing City limits include residential, commercial, and industrial developments, as well as public facilities comprised of parks, schools, public utilities, the Mission College Campus, and private institutions like Santa Clara University. Since the City is bound completely by neighboring jurisdictions, the Planning Area is confined to the City Limits (Figure 2).

5. PROJECT SPONSOR'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

City of Santa Clara
Planning Division
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050

6. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

The current City of Santa Clara General Plan was last comprehensively updated in 1992; the Housing Element was updated in 2002. Although many of the policies and ordinances in these documents are still relevant, much has changed since their adoption—particularly for the General Plan, which was adopted over 15 years ago. Since 2002, the City's population increased by 11 percent, while employment decreased significantly following the dot-com collapse in the early 2000s. However, employment generation is again on the rise, and the Association of Bay Area Governments projects that the City will add an additional 50,000 new jobs over the next 25 years. ABAG also expects population to increase to a projected 146,100—an increase of over 26 percent from 2008 to 2035. The General Plan Update provides the community with an opportunity to clarify its vision for future development patterns, transportation systems, economic development opportunities, and sustainable growth. The General Plan will have a horizon to 2035. The Housing Element is being updated concurrently, with a horizon of 2014.

As part of the General Plan Update, the Housing Element will be included in the CEQA analysis for the General Plan.

The General Plan Update will likely address the following topics, which will be combined into an integrated Plan:

- Land Use;
- Housing;
- Community Design and Historic Preservation;
- Sustainability;
- Transportation;
- Parks and Recreation;
- Conservation/Environmental Quality;
- Safety;
- Noise; and
- Public Facilities and Services.

General Plan Update

Work on the General Plan Update is in progress. The scope includes a review of background material and preparation of two initial working papers: *Population, Demographics, Employment and the Real Estate Market* and the *Opportunities and Challenges Report*. The market analysis (Working Paper #1) documents existing and future market conditions, with specific focus on key employment and industrial areas in the City. The *Opportunities and Challenges Report* (Working Paper #2) will contain a description and series of maps documenting existing land uses, public facilities, and environmental conditions within the City of Santa Clara. Coinciding with the preparation of the first two working papers, initial outreach in the form of stakeholder interviews and community workshops were held in May, June, and August of 2008. This outreach will continue and also contribute to the environmental analysis for the project.

The next step of the General Plan Update will include development of potential land use/transportation alternatives through direct participation with the community and General Plan Steering Committee. The alternatives will focus on changes at identified locations within the City. A citywide survey will be conducted to help formulate the alternative plans, followed by an additional community workshop to further identify and refine concepts for the alternatives. The resulting concepts for the alternatives will be presented to the Steering Committee for further refinement, followed by a discussion of the relative advantages and disadvantages of each with City decision-makers. Following this process, a Preferred Plan will be prepared and reviewed by the community and Steering Committee prior to presentation to City decision-makers. Based on the Preferred Plan, the General Plan Update will be drafted.

A final community workshop will ensure that the community's needs have been addressed in the proposed Preferred Plan. A series of public hearings will then allow City decision-makers to consider the proposed Plan.

Housing Element Update

During preparation of the General Plan Update, the Housing Element Update will also be prepared. The Housing Element will encompass all requirements for housing elements as defined under State law. Key housing issues were discussed with housing providers in July 2008 and at a community workshop in August 2008.

7. EIR

This NOP is a required publication at the outset of the EIR process.

The EIR will provide a programmatic environmental assessment of the potential consequences of the proposed General Plan Update. It will discuss how General Plan policies could potentially affect the environment, identify any significant impacts, and recommend measures to mitigate those impacts. The EIR will also consider the potential environmental impacts of alternatives, and identify an environmentally superior alternative. Subsequent environmental review will be conducted for major development projects, public works and

infrastructure improvements to evaluate site-specific issues.

8. SURROUNDING LAND USES AND SETTING:

Santa Clara's Planning Area boundaries coincide with the municipal boundaries of San José to the north, east and south, and Sunnyvale and Cupertino to the west. The southern end of the San Francisco Bay is also just north of the City. Several creeks and rivers run through and adjacent to the City, including the Guadalupe River—along a portion of the eastern border of the City—and the San Tomas Aquino, Saratoga, and Calabazas creeks run north-south through the City.

9. OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL IS REQUIRED:

No other public agency is required to approve the Santa Clara General Plan Update. However, development under the General Plan may require approval of State, federal and responsible trustee agencies that may rely on this EIR for information relative to their area of expertise and jurisdiction.

10. POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS TO BE CONSIDERED:

Preliminary topics for the EIR include:

- Land Use (including jobs and housing);
- Aesthetics and Visual Resources;
- Open Space and Recreation;
- Biological Resources;
- Cultural Resources;
- Transportation and Traffic;
- Air Quality;
- Noise and Vibration;
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity;
- Hydrology and Flooding;
- Public Services and Utilities;
- Energy;
- Climate Change; and
- Hazardous Materials and Toxics.

In addition to the potential environmental effects listed above, the EIR will evaluate potential cumulative effects and potential growth inducing impacts of the proposed Santa Clara General Plan Update as well as alternatives to the proposed General Plan Update. The No

Project alternative will evaluate the impacts resulting from continued implementation of existing plans, policies, and regulations which govern the City. As appropriate, other alternatives that would avoid or lessen environmental effects related to the proposed Santa Clara General Plan Update will be discussed. The draft EIR will also recommend measures to mitigate any significant environmental impacts.

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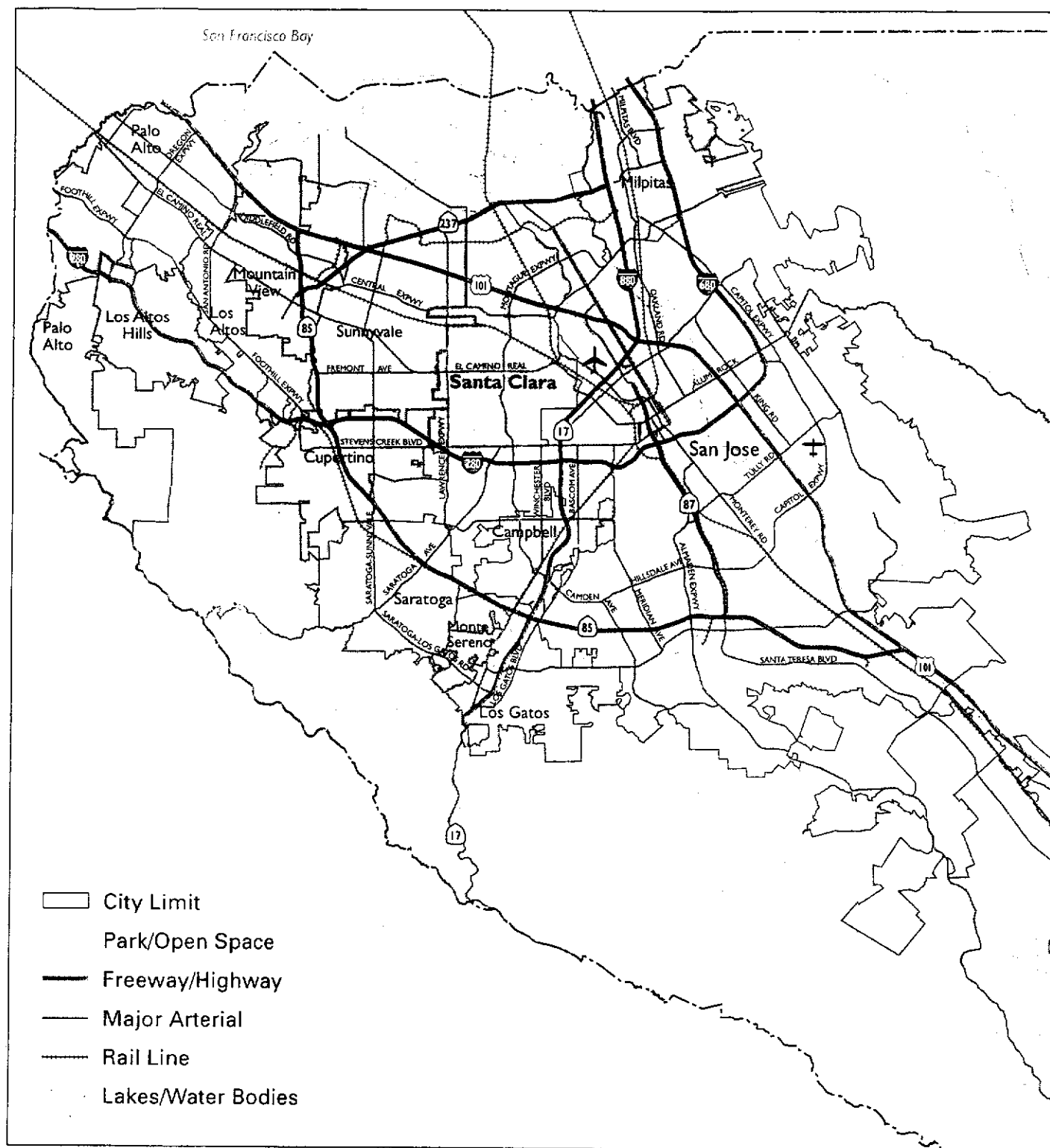


Figure 1
City of Santa Clara
Subregional Location

Figure 2
City of Santa Clara
Planning Boundary

--- City Limits

